

Rosie Ray

A Tale of Watery Wings



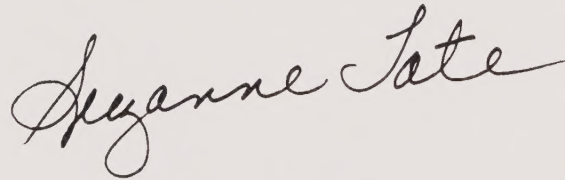
Suzanne Tate
Illustrated by James Melvin

Elegant and Graceful Creatures

I am glad that my readers requested a book about a ray. That led me to a lot of interesting facts in doing research for this book. *Rosie Ray* is about a spotted eagle ray—one of the most elegant and graceful creatures in the sea. I was fascinated to learn how this species of ray “flies” through the water with its wing-like fins and even leaps into the air! For protection from enemies, the animal has a long, whip-like tail with 2-5 toxic spines at the base of it.

The spotted eagle ray takes its name from the fact that it has a bird-like snout. It aids the animal in burrowing for food in the sea bottom. An adult of the species is a large animal weighing 200-400 pounds. Its snout is pointed in shape. The young of the species have more rounded snouts and are called pups. I always search for unusual facts when writing my nature stories. A marine biologist told me about dolphins playing with rays, and I used that interesting information in *Rosie Ray*.

Spotted eagle rays are found in tropical and subtropical waters. My husband told me how he enjoyed seeing the colorful creatures when working as a shrimp boat captain out of Charleston, South Carolina. He observed eagle rays there that were deep purple with cream-colored spots—the way James Melvin has beautifully painted them for *Rosie Ray*.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Suzanne Tate". The signature is written in dark ink and is centered on the page.

As with all of Suzanne Tate's Nature Series, in *Rosie Ray* detailed attention is given both to the morphological and physiological characteristics of spotted eagle rays and their associated behavior. Suzanne Tate demonstrates in *Rosie Ray* that all of us are capable of being “Helpful Humans,” even when outside of our natural environment.

Scientific Staff
The Pier Aquarium
St. Petersburg, Florida

Rosie Ray

HAPPY READING!

This book is especially for:

Suzanne Tate

Author—
brings fun and
facts to us in her
Nature Series.

James Melvin

Illustrator—
brings joyous life
to Suzanne Tate's
characters.



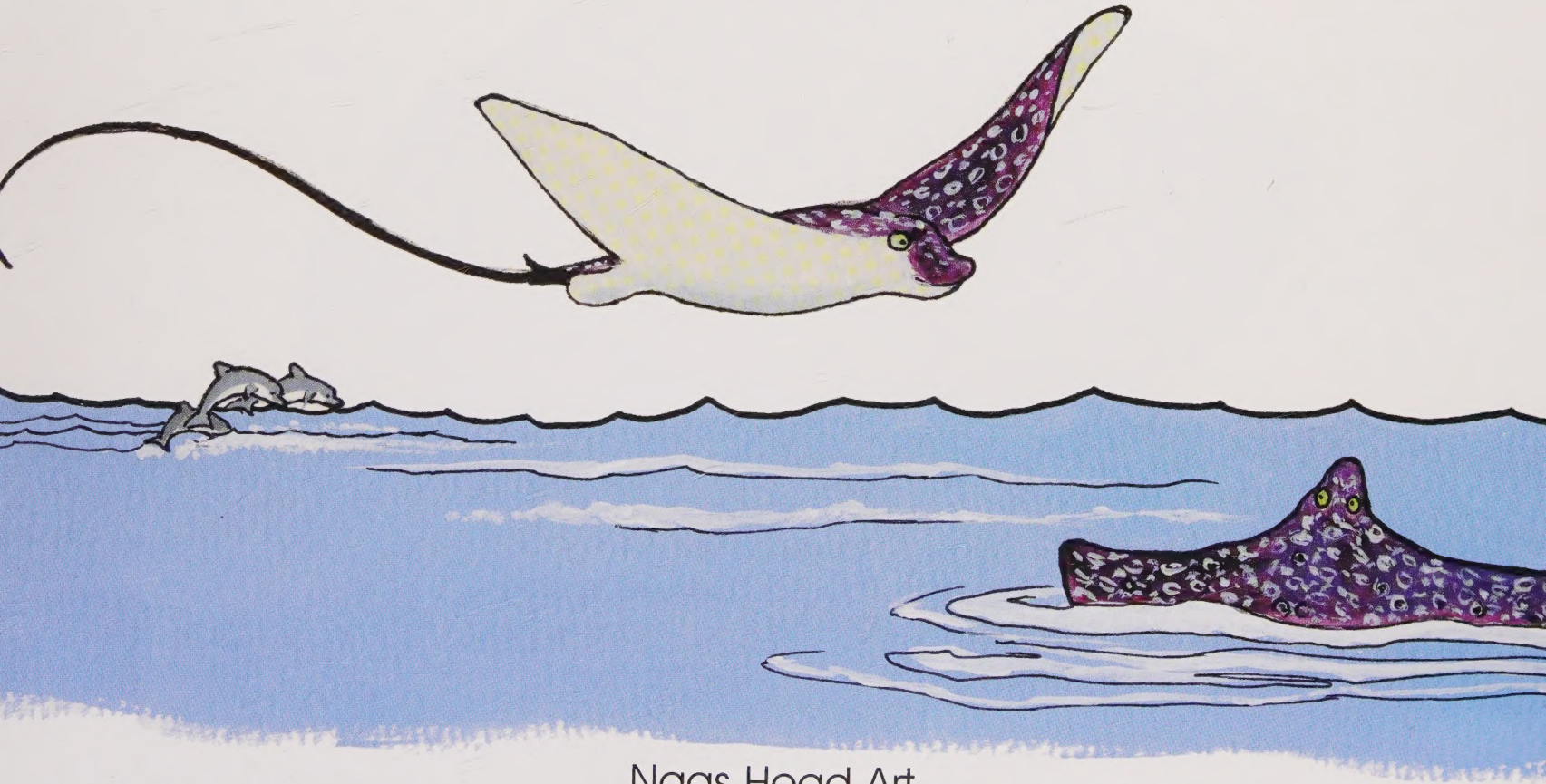
Author Suzanne Tate
and
Illustrator James Melvin

Rosie Ray

A Tale of Watery Wings

Suzanne Tate

Illustrated by James Melvin



Nags Head Art

*To Mary Riddick
who lovingly inspired her students
to follow their dreams*

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number 2002096213

ISBN 978-1-878405-40-1

ISBN 1-878405-40-3

Published by

Nags Head Art, Inc., P.O. Box 2149, Manteo, NC 27954

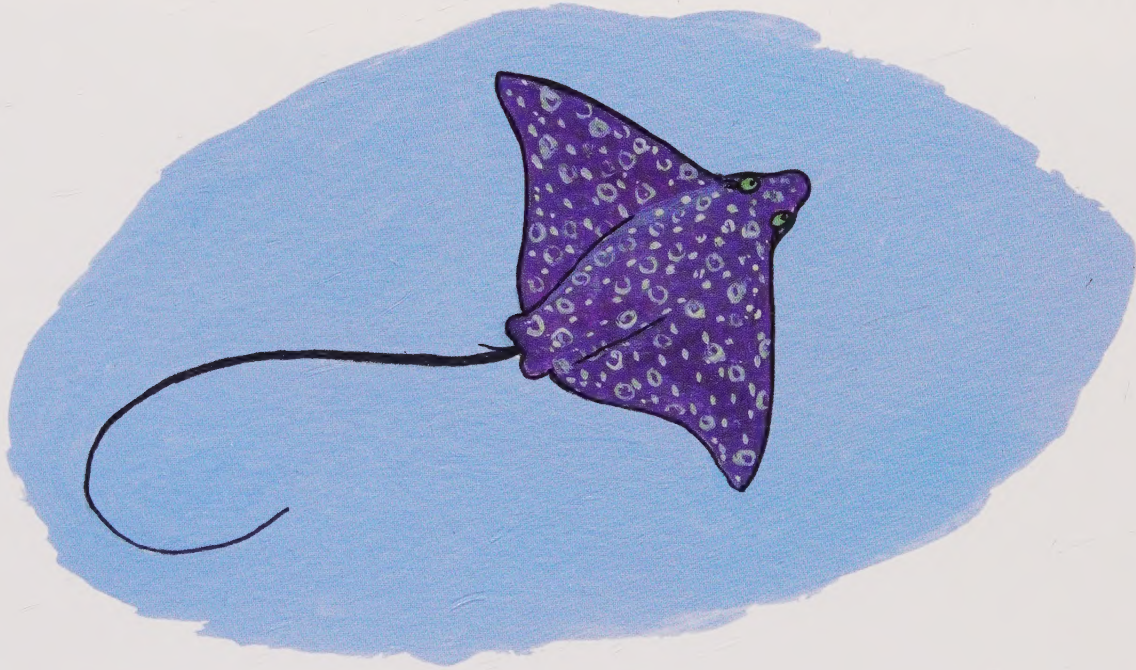
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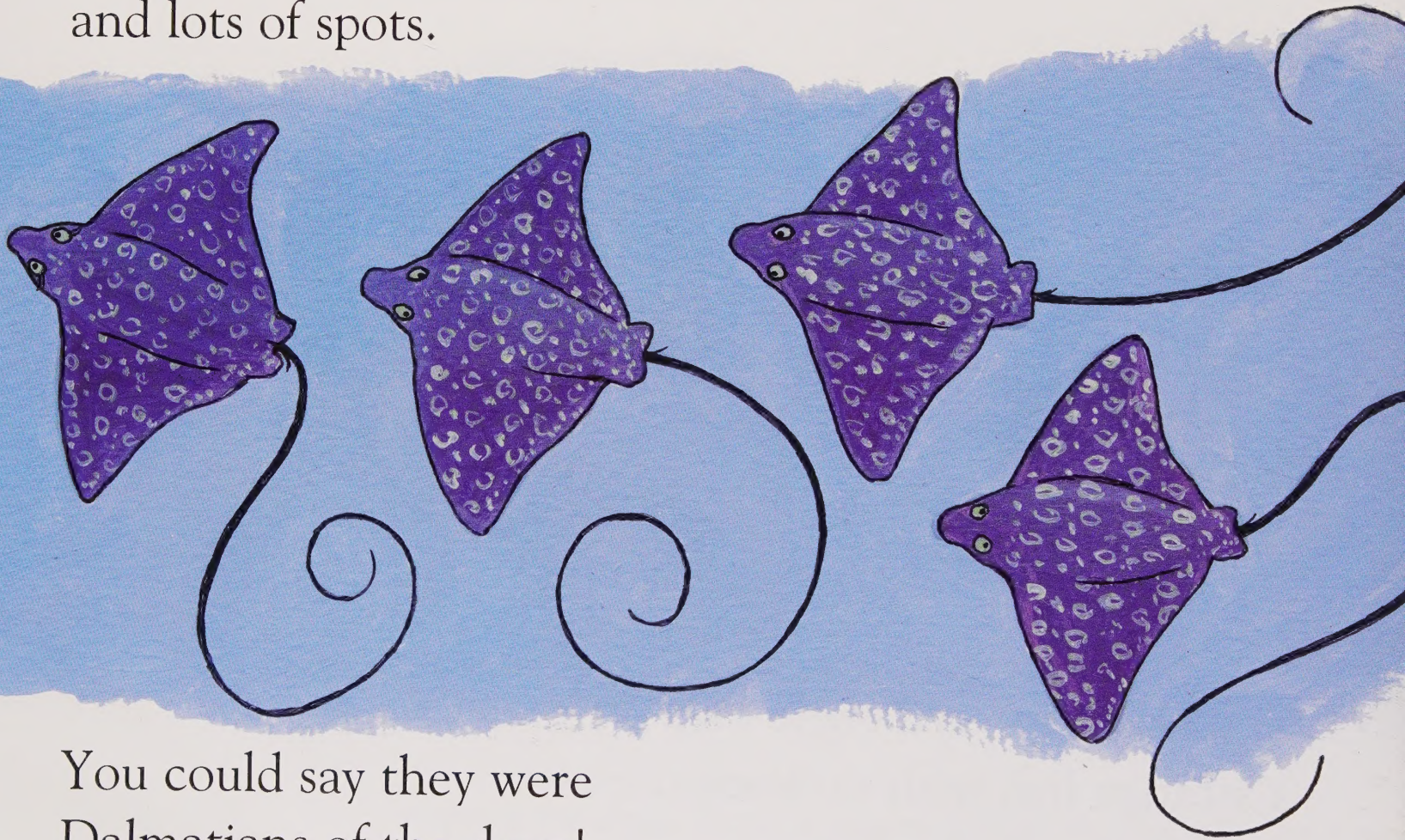
Revised Edition

Rosie Ray was soft and smooth —
a newly born ray pup.



She was a spotted eagle ray,
a strange fish with no bones.
And her wide flat fins were like wings!

Rosie's mother had given birth to four ray pups.
The baby eagle rays had long tails
and lots of spots.



You could say they were
Dalmatians of the deep!

Right away, the eagle ray mother began
to swim away from her pups.

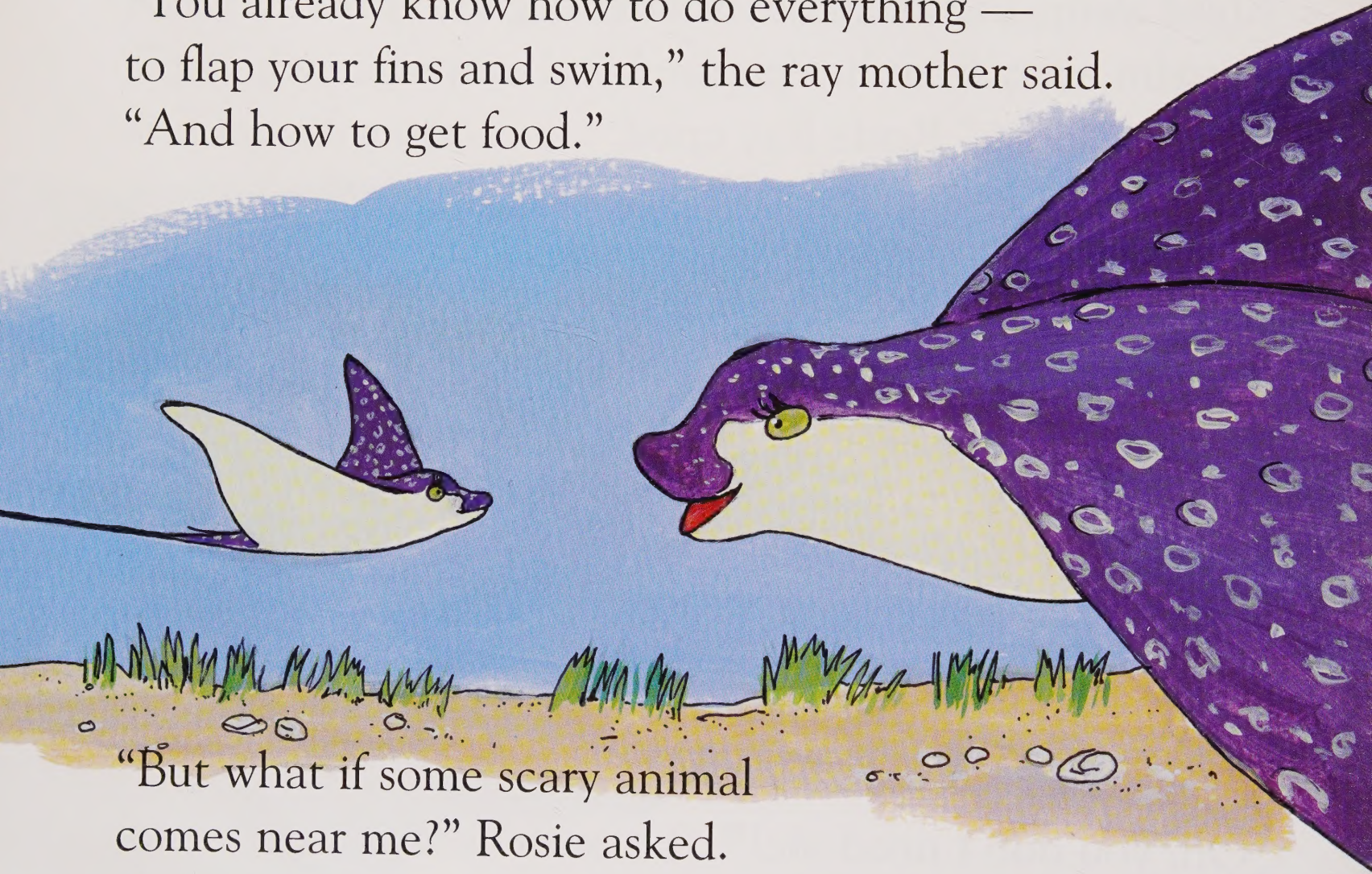
“Wait, Mama,” Rosie Ray cried.

“Where are you going?”



“Oh, you don’t need me!”
her mother replied.

“You already know how to do everything — to flap your fins and swim,” the ray mother said. “And how to get food.”



“But what if some scary animal comes near me?” Rosie asked.

“I want you to protect me.”

“See that stinging spine on your tail? It will help to protect you from enemies,” Rosie’s mother replied.



“But you should bury in the seabed if you sense danger,” she said as she swam away.

It wasn't long before a dark shape appeared
in the water above the eagle ray pups.



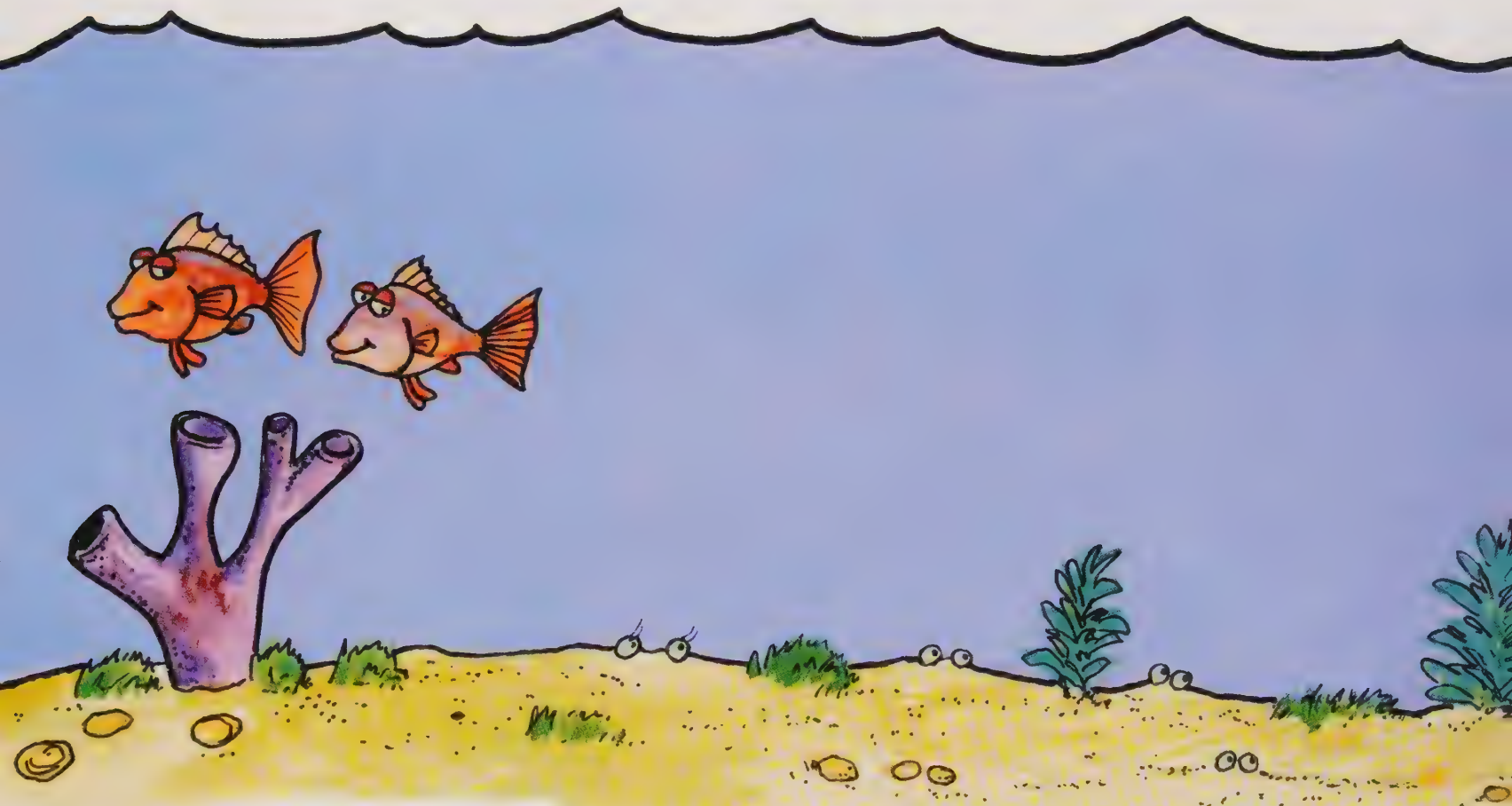
Rosie saw it first.
“Quick! Let’s flap our fins and
bury ourselves,” she said.

“Yes!” Ronnie Ray — a brother pup — agreed.
“Our spotted tops will hide us in the sand.”
The ray pups quickly fanned their flat fins.



Sand swirled and covered their bodies.

Then, the little ray pups didn't fan a fin.
Only their eyes peeked out!



It was just in time!

That dark shape was a big,
hungry hammerhead shark.

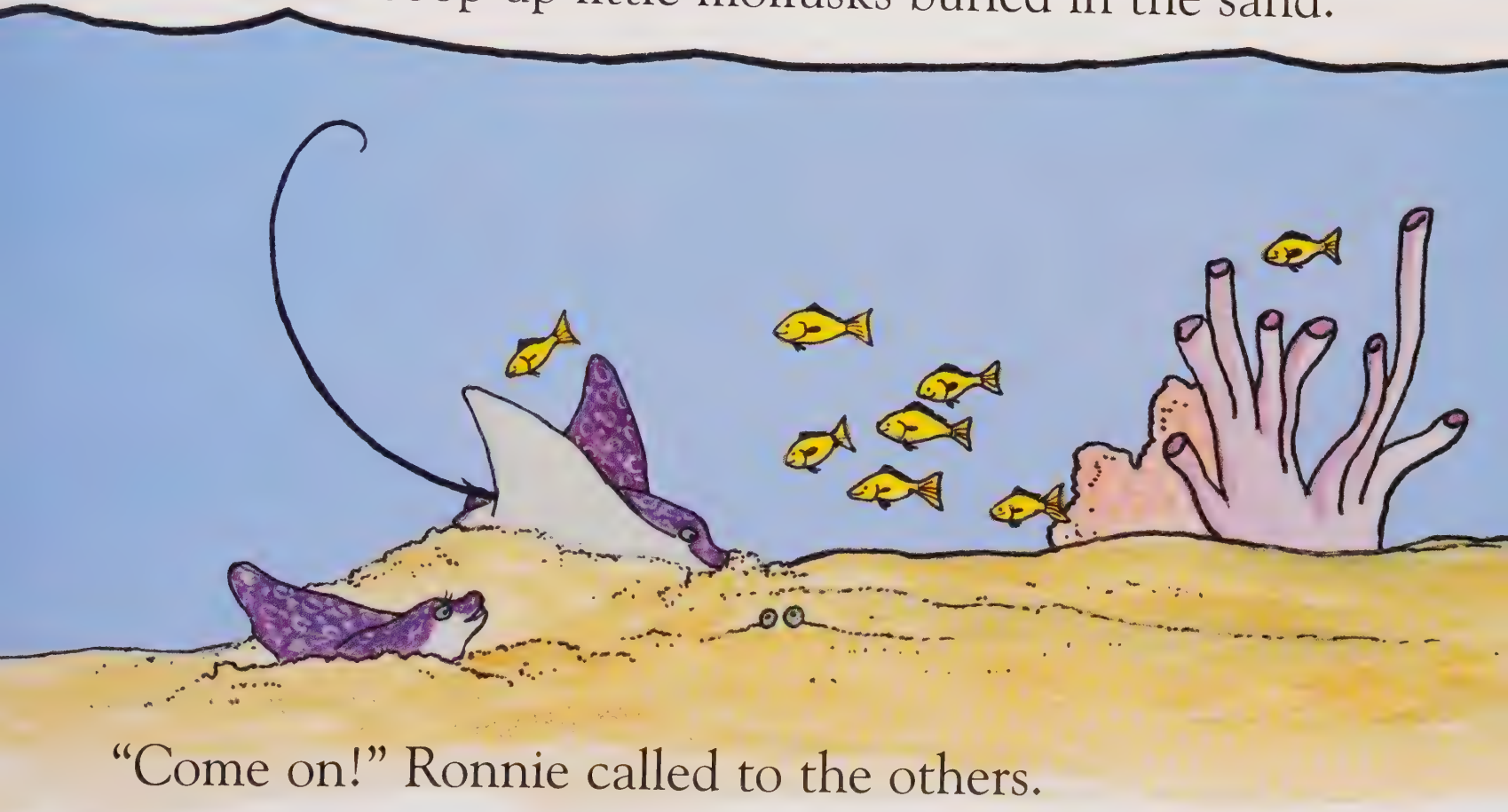


He was a close cousin to rays.
But they were only food to him!

The baby rays knew to stay still until danger swam away.
“I’m hungry! Can we come out now?” Ronnie asked.
“We can look for food,” Rosie replied, “if we are careful.”

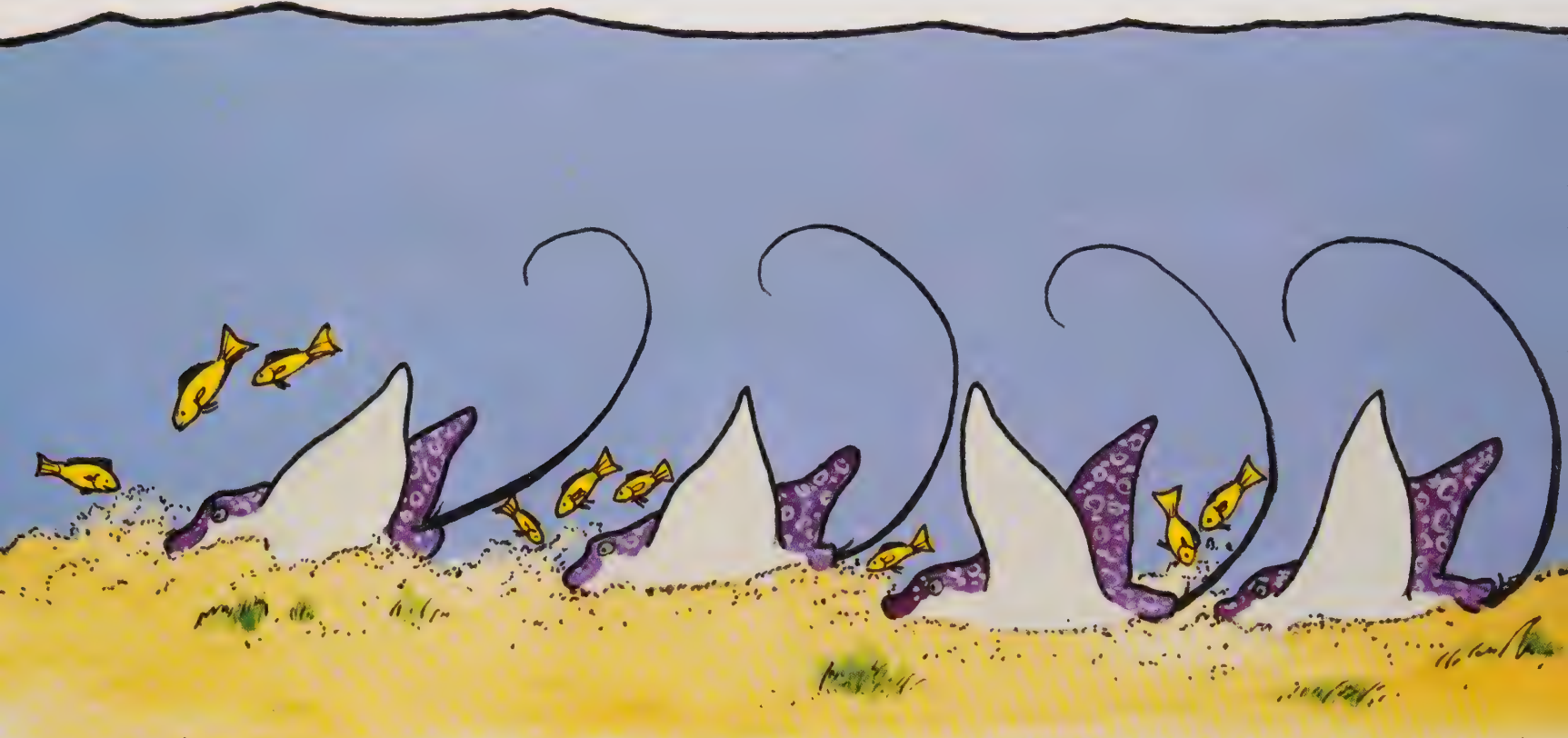


Ronnie began to shove his snout into the sandy seabed.
The snout on his head was shaped like a bird's bill!
He could scoop up little mollusks buried in the sand.



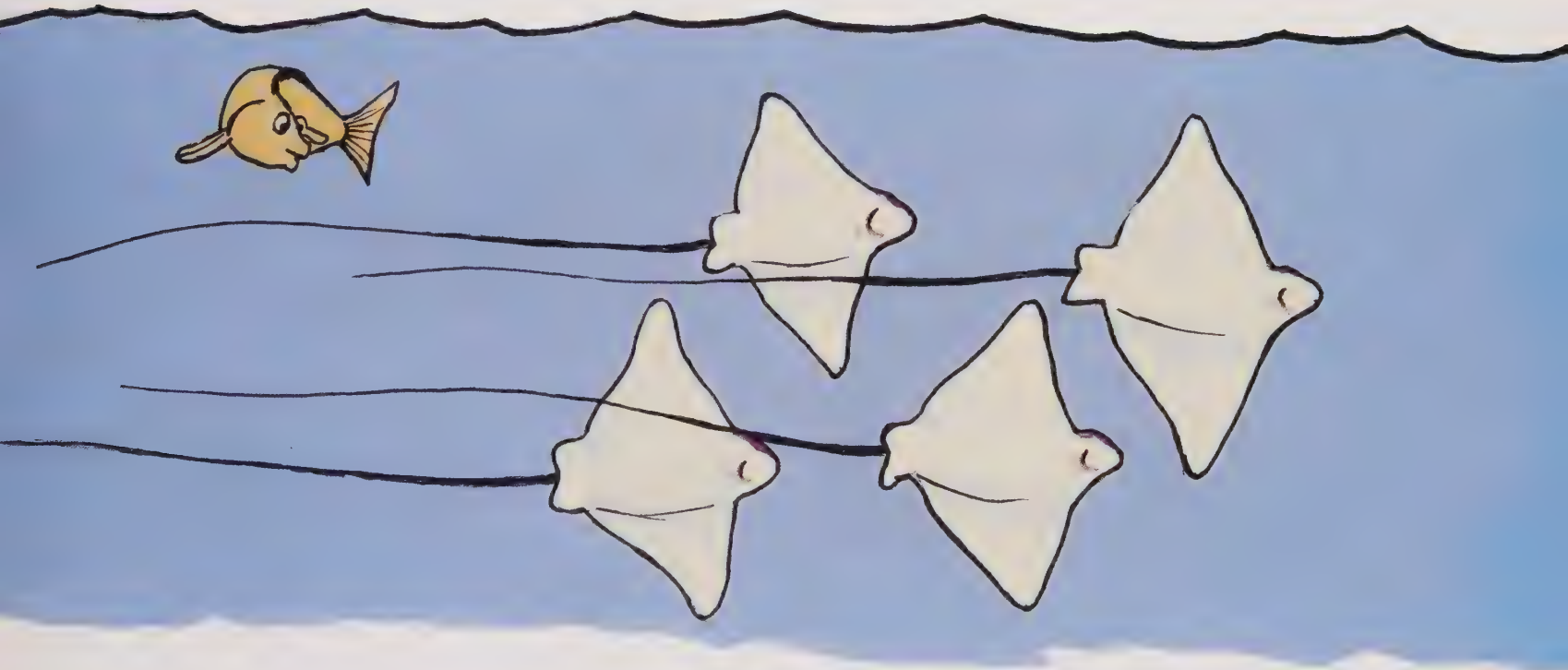
“Come on!” Ronnie called to the others.
“There’s plenty of food for us here.”

Rosie and the other little ray pups all
shoved their snouts through the sand.
Little fish followed them for scraps.



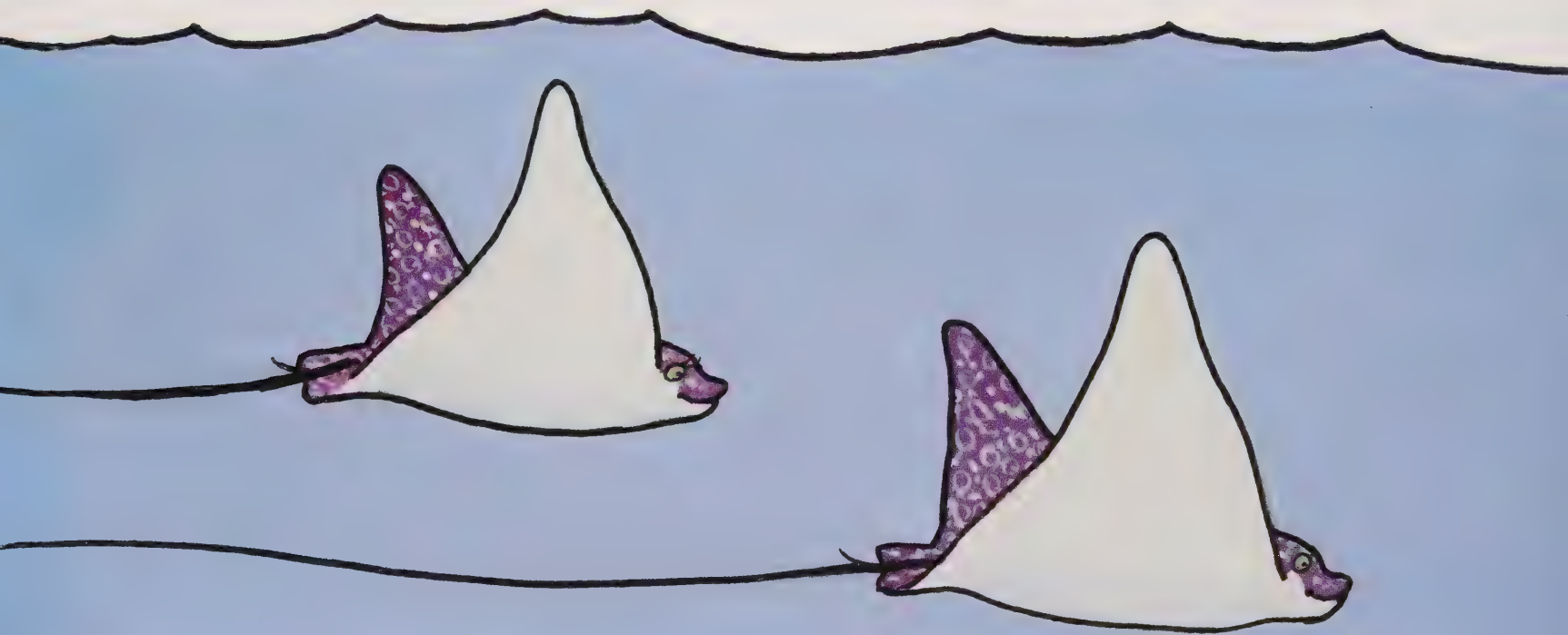
The young spotted eagle rays needed a lot of food to grow.
But they could smell well and find lots of prey.

Soon, all of the little mollusks
were scooped up and gone!



“I’m going to move to a new place,”
Rosie said. “We will too,” said the other ray pups,
flapping their watery wings.

The young rays found lots of food.
They grew stronger and larger.



One day, Rosie and Ronnie swam away from the others.
They “flew” fast with their wide, watery wings.

All of a sudden, Ronnie discovered that he could leap out of the water!



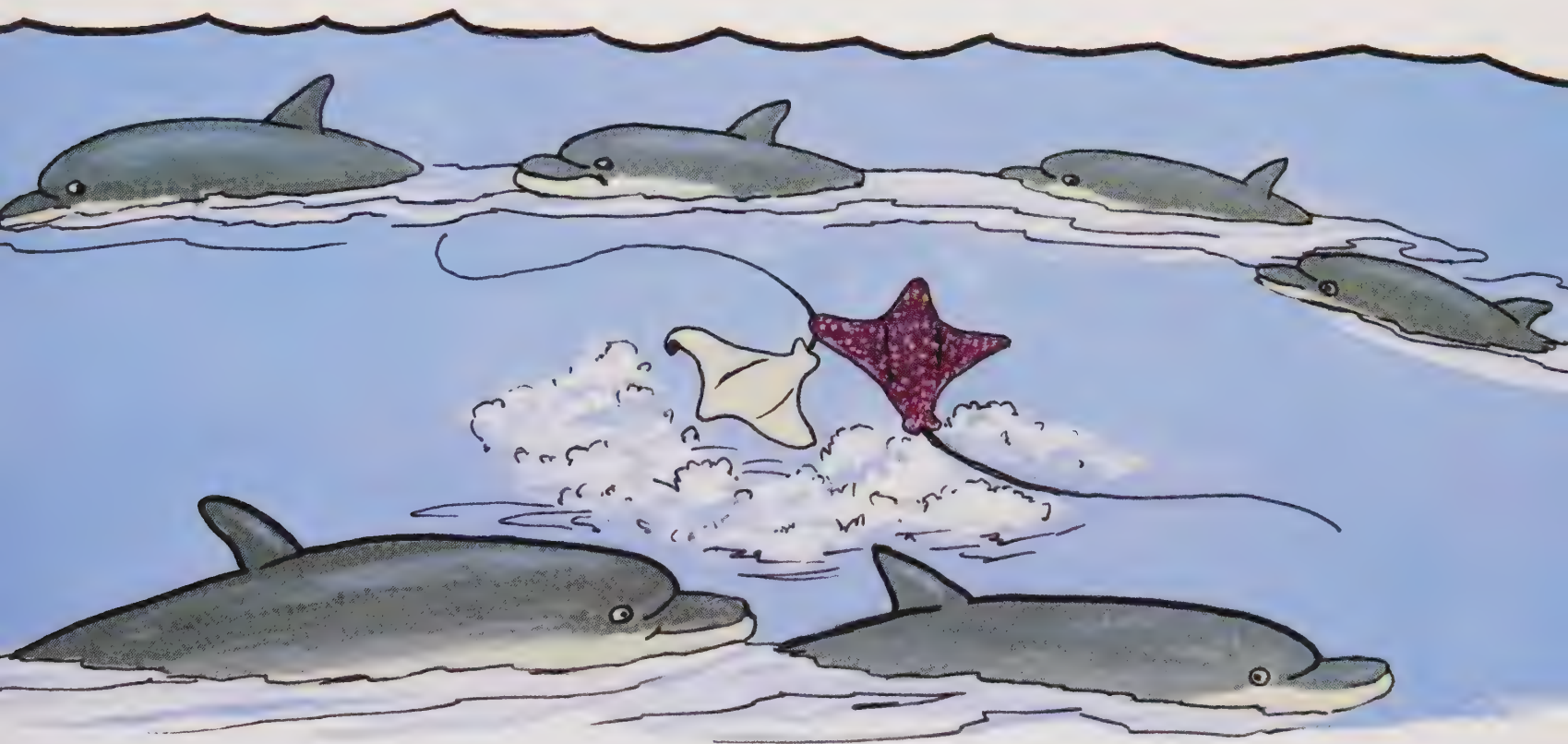
“Watch this!” he called to Rosie.
He flapped his fins and went
up and out of the water!

“I’m going to try that too!” Rosie said.
She fanned her fins fast and
leaped from the water.



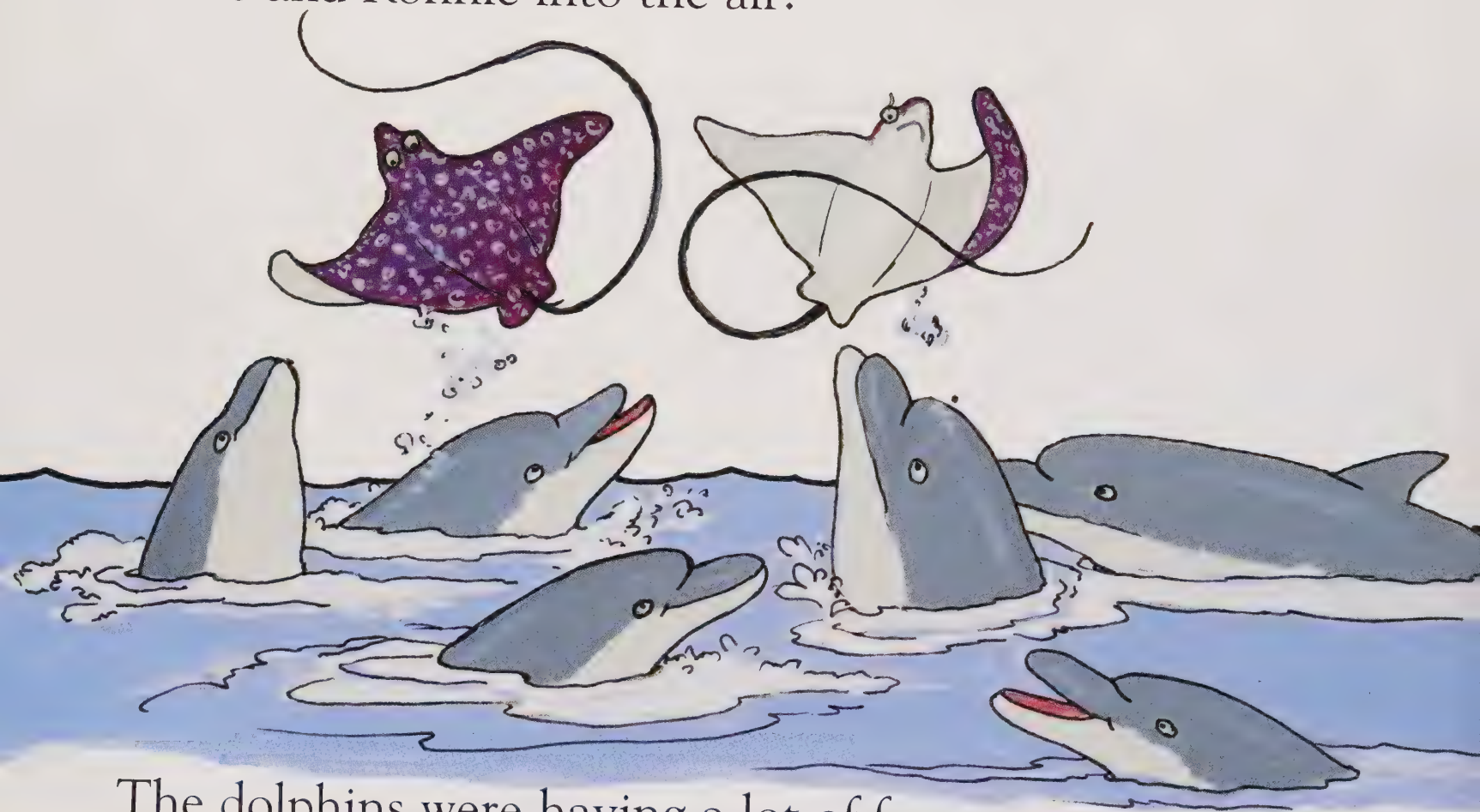
“How graceful you look!” Ronnie exclaimed.

The young eagle rays were having so much fun!
But they forgot to watch for danger.



Big dolphins began to swim in a circle
around the young rays.

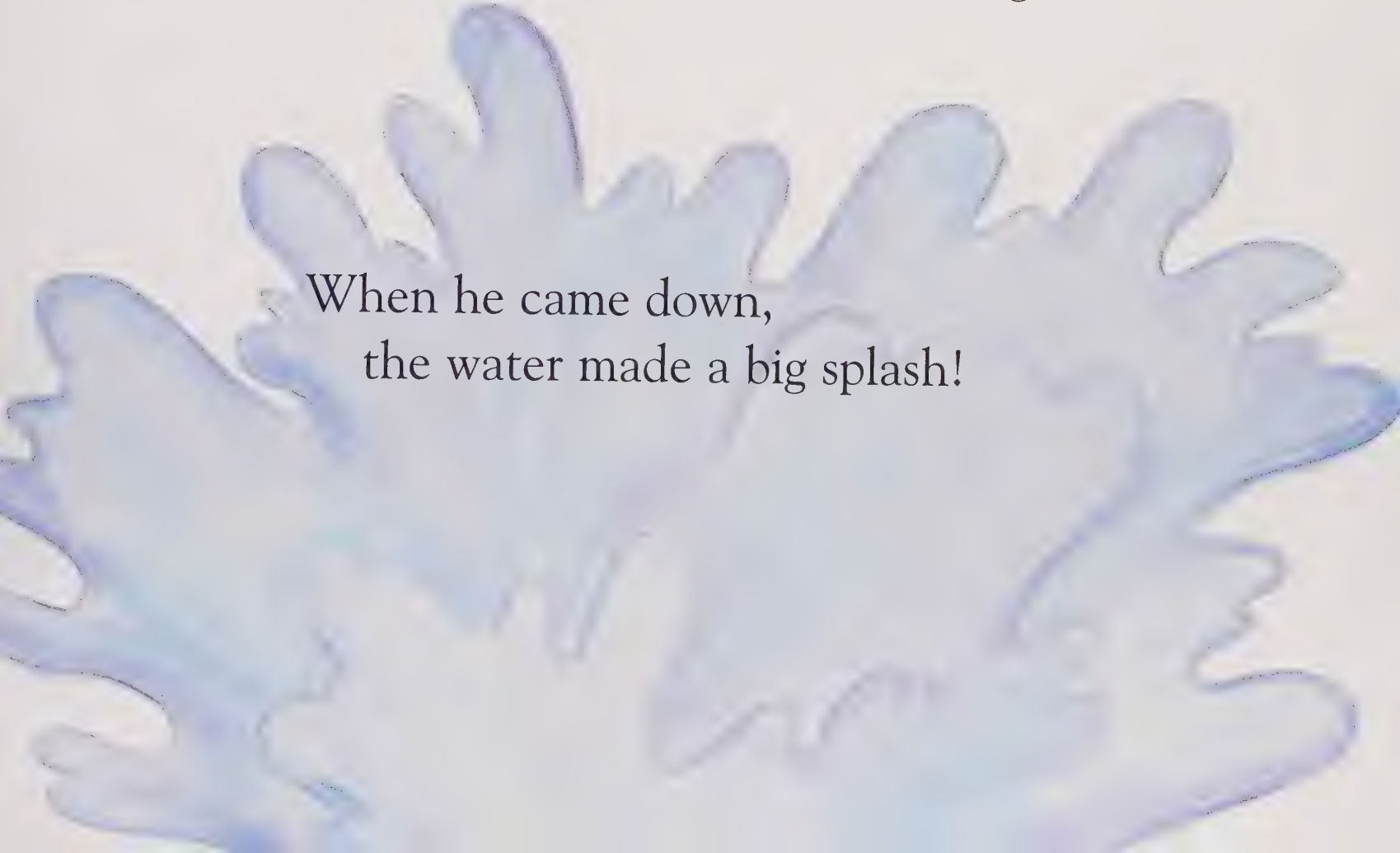
Suddenly, they began to toss
Rosie and Ronnie into the air!



The dolphins were having a lot of fun —
but it wasn't a game the rays liked.

“I’m scared!” Rosie cried. “What are we going to do?”
But Ronnie wasn’t any help — he was scared too.
Just then, Ronnie was tossed into the air again.

When he came down,
the water made a big splash!

A large, stylized blue splash graphic that fills the lower half of the page. It has a soft, watercolor-like texture with various shades of light blue and white, creating a sense of movement and liquid. The splash is centered behind the text, which is written in a simple, black, sans-serif font.

HELPFUL HUMANS were nearby in a boat.
They saw what was happening!



“Look at those beautiful spotted eagle rays,”
one of the HUMANS said. “They are in trouble.
We need to help them.”

Quickly, the HELPFUL HUMANS started their motor.
They ran the boat fast — kicking up waves!



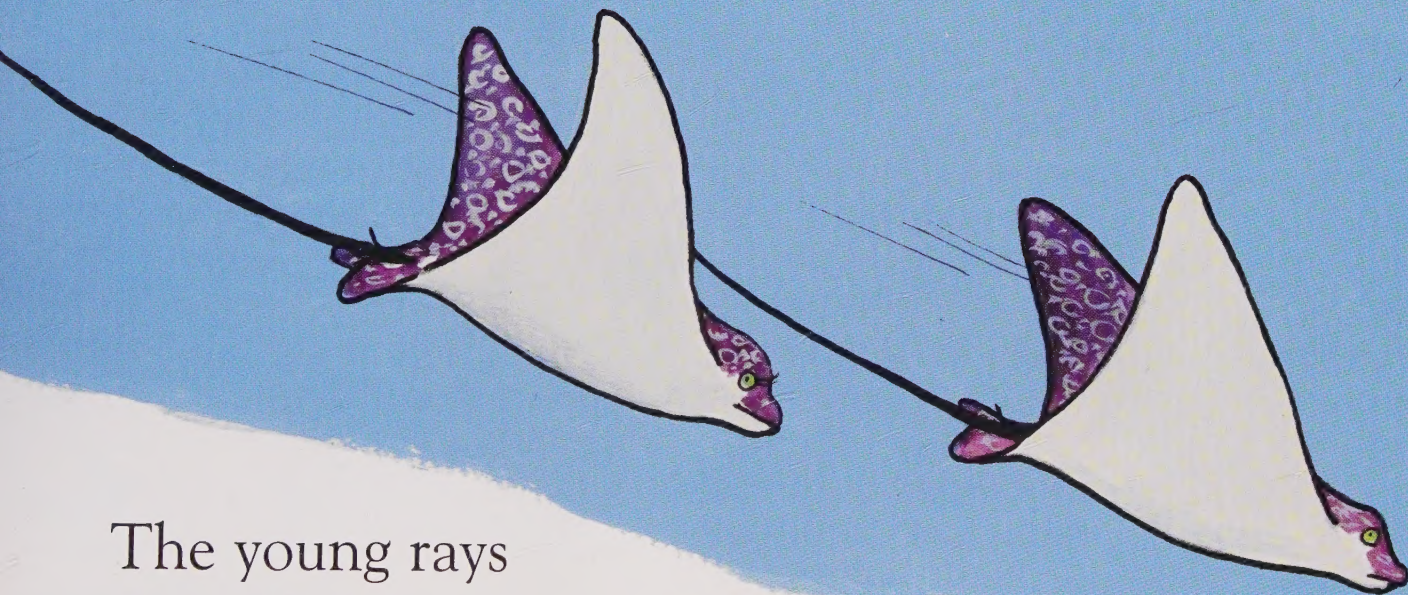
Dolphins love to chase boats!
They stopped playing with the rays
and followed the HUMANS.

Rosie and Ronnie were happy to see
the dolphins swim away.

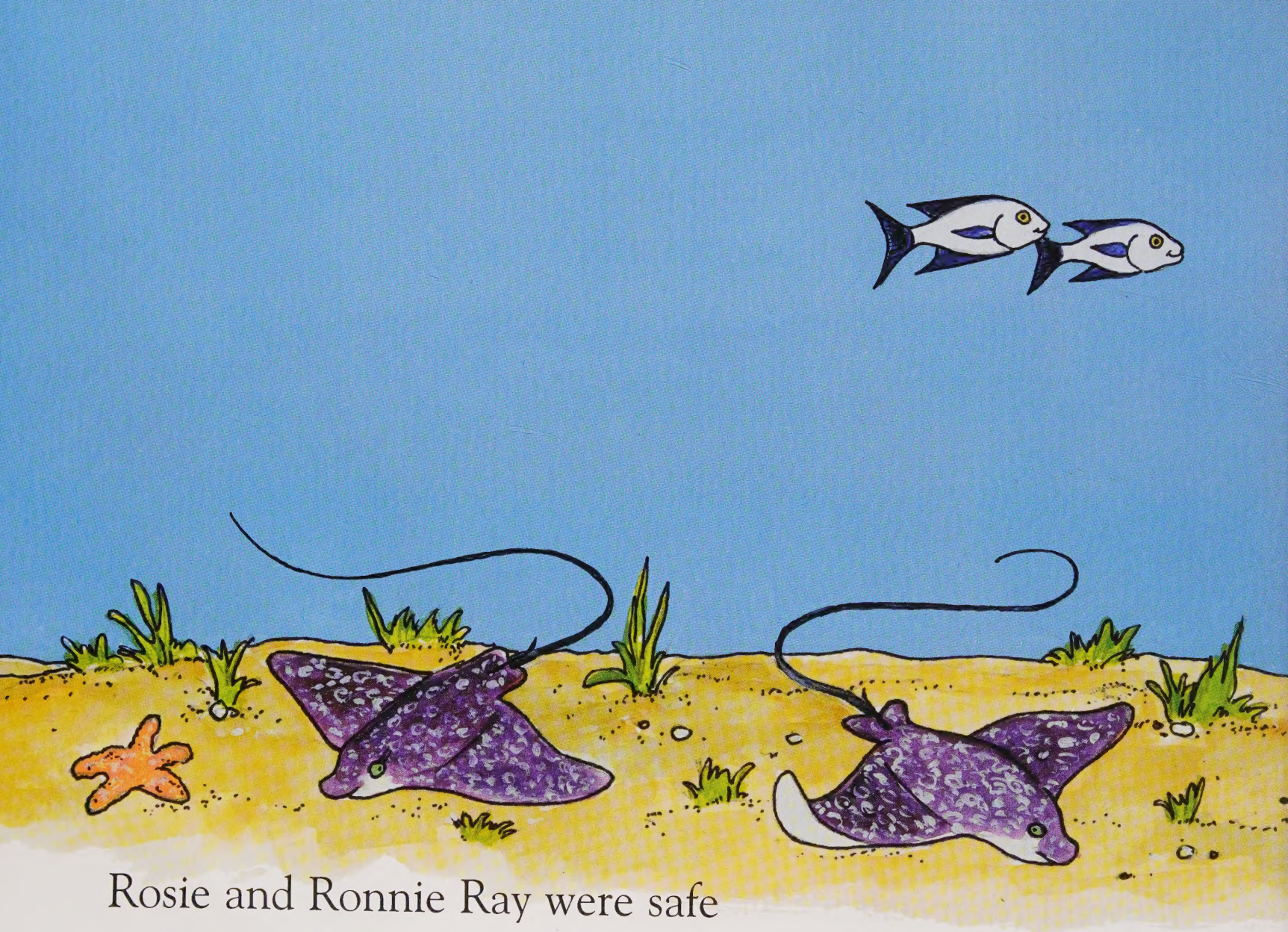


"I'm glad that they are leaving us alone,"
Rosie sighed happily.

“HELPFUL HUMANS were here
at the right time,” Ronnie said.
“And now, let’s get out of here!”



The young rays
flapped their watery wings
and swam quickly to the bottom of the sea.



Rosie and Ronnie Ray were safe
at last on the sandy seabed.

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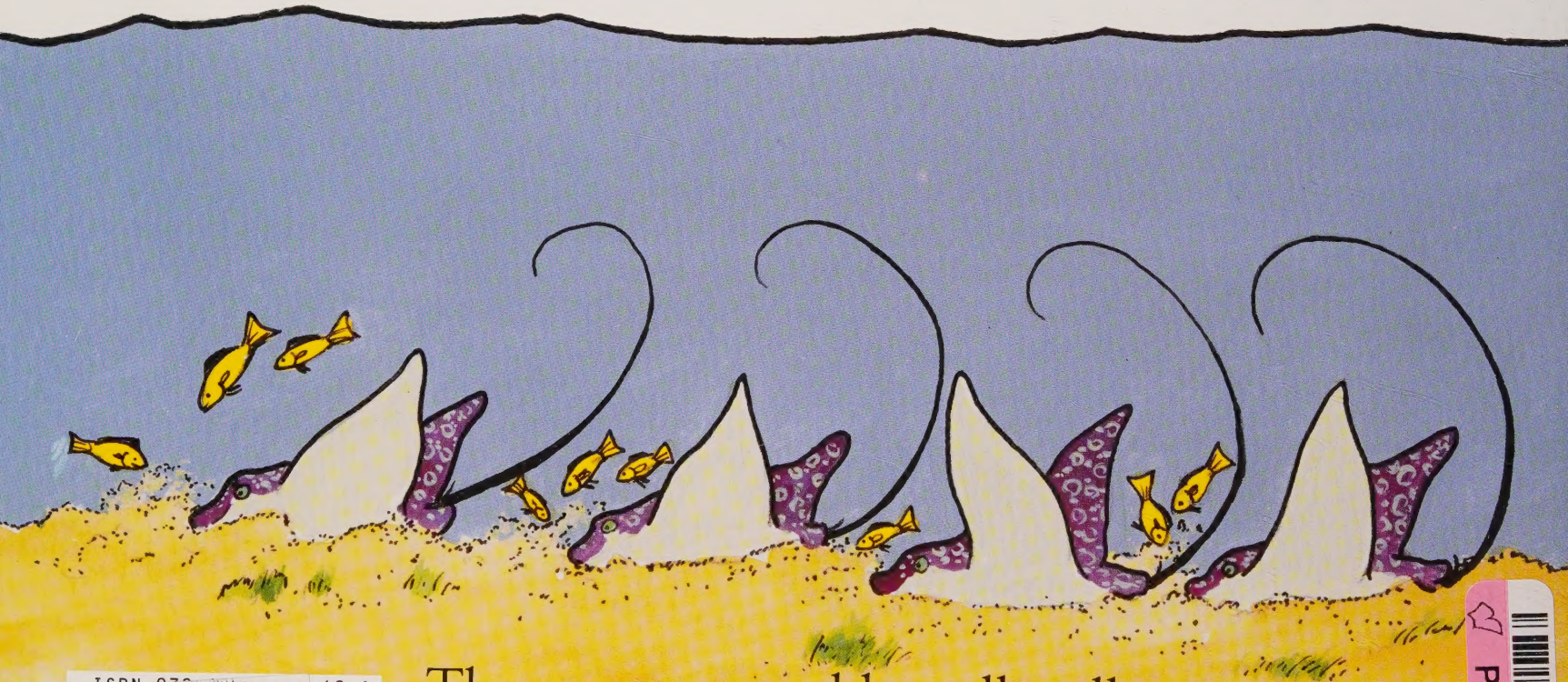
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The ray pups could smell well
and find lots of prey.



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\$5.95 U.S.

P9-EHE-386

